

**Concordia University
Faculty of Fine Arts Council
Minutes of the Meeting of April 27, 2001**

Present: C. Jackson (Chair); L. Berezowsky, D. Berthiaume, M. Corwin, P. Cousineau, A. Fairchild, A. Fagnoli, K. Griffin, N. Helms, H. Johnson, W. Krol, P. Langdon, B. Layne, L. Lerner, J. Locke, E. Mongerson, M. Montanaro, D. Pariser, T. Waugh

Absent with apologies:

G. Amantea, M. Brodeur, R. Kerr, K. O'Brien, K. Perry, E. Saccá

Guests: E. Abitbol, K. Adams, J.-P. Duchesne

1. Approval of the Agenda

The agenda was approved.

2. Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of March 16, 2001

MOTION: (Montanaro, Fairchild)

“that the minutes of the meeting of March 16, 2001 be approved.”

CARRIED

3. Business Arising from the Minutes

There was no business arising from the minutes.

4. Chair's Remarks

The Dean made the following remarks:

- \$6 million has been received from Valorisation-Recherche Québec (VRQ) for the joint Concordia/UQAM research consortium known as the Institute for Emerging Digital Arts.
- Barbara Layne and Lynn Hughes led Concordia's team of researchers, and worked closely with Innovitech in developing this proposal; profound thanks to both of these individuals for the extraordinary work that they have done.
- This is one of the most significant events in the Faculty's history; important because it is the first time that the Faculty has penetrated the research establishment on its own terms, and received funding for projects that are defined and driven by artist/researchers. Traditional funding organizations, such as FCAR, have often excluded the fine arts or required that artist/researchers conform to existing programs better suited to the sciences, engineering and medicine. For the first time, there is formal recognition of the role of the artist/researcher.

- There are other implications. The Institute is not a stand alone operation, but rather one that must be created and reside within the two participating Faculties at Concordia and UQAM. Ultimately, investments will arrive in the Faculties and every one will feel the effects.
- Dean Jackson has been asked to Chair the “comité de gestion” of the Institute. Among other things, this committee will be responsible for structuring the Institute, and hiring a permanent Director.
- A complete presentation on the above will be made at the first meeting of Council next September.
- Recently, there has been other positive news on the research front. Three faculty members received FCAR grants under the “nouveaux chercheurs” programme (Ted Little, Yves Bilodeau, and Richard Lachapelle), and two faculty members received team grants (Lynn Hughes with UQAM and Irene Whittome with Université de Montréal).

5. Question Period

In response to several questions regarding the above, Dean Jackson noted the following:

- The Faculty will also be applying for a CFI grant which, if successful, would provide funds to build space for these labs at Concordia. UQAM has adequate space; Concordia presently does not.
- The VRQ money will be used to buy equipment, hire researchers, and pay technical and administrative costs for the projects.
- The Faculty is projecting a balanced budget on May 31, but this is due to its Financial Plan, receipt of FTE funding, and other operating budget subsidies. VRQ funds will not be used to eradicate the Faculty’s operating deficit, however, the Faculty has invested some operating funds (primarily salaries) in the development of these projects and some form of credit will, therefore, be required.

6. Undergraduate Curriculum Report #70 (FFAC-01-04-27-D1) Undergraduate Curriculum Report #71 (FFAC-01-04-27-D2)

Associate Dean A. Fairchild introduced the two curriculum reports, noting that a change in the approval process has meant that the reports have already been vetted by the Faculty Curriculum Committee, and the Academic Programmes Committee, and are now being presented to Council for final approval.

MOTION: (Fairchild, Langdon)

“that Undergraduate Curriculum Report #70 be approved.”

N. Helms described the changes proposed in Report #70. In summary, the changes reflect and update the way in which the Drama for Human Development courses are offered, and distinguish them from those offered under the old DINE designation. In addition, it is the Department’s belief that these course descriptions will be more attractive to potential applicants, most of whom express particular interest in the alternative, localised, populist and participatory, culturally democratic and inclusive approaches to theatre arts that this program offers.

Next, the Department will propose a program name change from the current "Drama for Human Development" to "Theatre and Development". The term "Human Development" suggests an emphasis on the individualistic, psychological and therapeutic applications of theatre and development, which does not reflect the more socio-political, theatre performance aspects at the heart of the program.

In light of the above, H. Johnson asked if there was a program in place to recruit and hire faculty members with diverse backgrounds to teach in such programs. The Dean confirmed that the University has an employment equity policy which the Faculty adheres to in the hiring process. E. Mongerson added that it is difficult to recruit in this area, and that many other community theatre groups are confronted with the same problem. To some extent, it is hoped that the Theatre and Development program will provide a training ground for future educators and professionals.

The question was then called and **CARRIED**.

MOTION: (Fairchild, Corwin)

"that Undergraduate Curriculum Report #71 be approved."

Associate Dean Fairchild introduced the report, which proposes a description change for the course FFAR 250 (6 credits), as well as FFAR 251 (3 credits) and FFAR 252 (3 credits). An ad hoc committee established to review the course has recommended several changes to the teaching and administration of the course, and is in the process of hiring for next year. This change in course description clarifies the purpose of the course, relating it to contemporary art practice, though it does not substantially change the essence of the course.

There were several questions concerning the three credit courses, in particular, why there was no pre-requisite involved. J.-P. Duchesne explained that these courses, which were intended for non-Fine Arts students, had never been offered due to a lack of space in the parent class, which is reserved for Fine Arts students, and has a course capacity of 600. Given that there appears to be ample physical space in H-110, T. Waugh asked why an additional 100 seats for non-Fine Arts students could not be added. In response, J.-P. Duchesne explained that the scheduling of additional tutorials (capacity of 30 students in each) was the problem.

Associate Dean Fairchild added that, for next year, the committee had recommended that one person be hired to develop and teach the course. The present system of tutorials with teaching assistants will remain in place, and will again be re-evaluated at the end of the year.

At this point, the Dean asked Associate Dean Fairchild to replace him as Chair of the meeting, as he wished to speak to the item on the floor.

Dean Jackson spoke against the proposed course description for the following reasons. In a course that is directed towards all Fine Arts students and is, therefore, supposed to be directed towards a broad group, at an introductory level, he found the new description "limiting". He preferred the old course description which he saw as more generic, and responsive to his concerns. In addition, he believed that the proposed course description emphasized a visual arts approach to the arts - and that performing arts students in the course would not be well served by this model. Finally, he suggested that it would be premature to approve such a change in course description, until another year of development and evaluation had been concluded.

As a member of the ad hoc committee, P. Cousineau noted that one of the primary problems the committee had identified was that there was no mechanism for bridging between the various disciplines, and in response to this concern, the committee had felt that it was necessary to develop some form of common vocabulary or basic critical language (e.g. subjectivity/objectivity) that would span all disciplines in order to make the course more coherent and meaningful for a very diverse group of students.

In speaking with students, N. Helms noted that Theatre students find a lot of the course to be "jargon", and are often afraid to ask for clarification. The teaching assistants need to help with this terminology, and the person organizing the course must ensure that this language is appropriately covered.

T. Waugh was puzzled by the Dean's comments, as he did not see any "visual imperialism" within the proposed description.

The Dean agreed that the committee's observations were clearly worthwhile, and should be passed on as a management objective to the teacher/coordinator. However, he did not think that this observation needed to be encased within the course description at this time, as it would only confine the job of the person who is teaching and developing the course.

Cognizant of the potential future relevance of the 3 credit courses (FFAR 251, 252) to our general education offerings, L. Lerner recommended preserving the present generic course descriptions. She was hesitant about the insertion of "critical vocabulary" into the description, particularly for non-fine arts students.

J. Locke agreed with L. Lerner's comments, referring back to the present description which describes FFAR 250 as "a lecture course surveying the current practice and theory of the visual and performing arts", and which he believes is adequate at the present time.

P. Cousineau was concerned that the ad hoc committee's work was being "unravelling" by Council. She reminded them that the committee had spoken with many students, faculty, and the teaching assistants before reaching its conclusions. A very clearly identified problem was that the course did not seem to provide students with "a scaffold" for referencing diverse presentations on everything from 18th c. painting to post modernism. She believed that the committee's conclusions were sound, and spoke in favour of the motion.

E. Mongerson saw an important distinction between the old and the new course descriptions. While the former allows for a discussion of vocabulary, the latter requires it. He agreed that this should be issued as an instructional suggestion to the instructor, and not part of the course description.

At this point in the discussion, the following motion was made:

MOTION: (Locke, Lerner)

"that discussion of the motion to approve Undergraduate Curriculum Report #71 be tabled."

CARRIED

7. Policy on Post Doctoral Fellows (FFAC-01-04-27-D3)

Associate Dean B. Layne introduced the above document, explaining the following. Post doctoral fellows are normally funded by external granting agencies such as the Tri-Councils. The University has received a request from NSERC (and SSHRC) to re-examine our policies on such positions. Though the Faculty of Fine Arts has not had any post doctoral fellows to date, it is timely that we review the proposed policy, particularly in light of the Strategic Plan, and a stronger emphasis on graduate studies and research in the future.

L. Lerner was concerned about the reference to teaching in the definition, particularly, as the original request from NSERC indicated that an issue of concern involved low salaries and benefits for this group.

As the document is rather generic, and Fine Arts has yet to apply it, after a brief discussion in which there were no further substantive comments on the policy, it was agreed to forward this feedback to Senate.

8. Graduate Mentoring Award (FFAC-01-04-27-D4)

The following comments were made concerning the above-noted document:

- Under Criteria, Point iv, Associate Dean A. Fairchild questioned the definition of the word "mentoring", asking how this activity is different and distinct from teaching.
- In response, D. Pariser noted that, in Art Education, it would mean that a nominee remains involved with students outside of courses and establishes professional connections with persons working in the field. Mentoring extends beyond the confines of the classroom, with its primary function being the integration of the learner into a professional network.
- P. Langdon agreed that, within the document, the distinctions between teaching and mentoring activities should be clarified.
- H. Johnson asked if there were incentives in place, that would both promote and encourage graduate mentoring. In response, it was pointed out that the award includes a \$1,000 professional allowance, and a plaque. He then asked if there was a similar award at the undergraduate level.
- Dean Jackson noted that emphasis upon graduate studies is important at this stage of the University's development. For many years, the University has been known primarily as an undergraduate institution, and has focused a great deal of attention upon support and development of undergraduate programs. Graduate study has become increasingly important, and proposals such as Graduate Mentoring, affirm a commitment to the promotion and development of graduate programs. There will be increasing attention upon this area in the future.
- D. Pariser added that Art Education, and many other graduate programs, appreciate the acknowledgment and attention that such awards denote.

As there were no further comments, the discussion was concluded. A summary of comments will be forwarded to University Senate.

9. Faculty of Fine Arts Strategic Plan (FFAC-01-04-27-D5)

In introducing the Strategic Plan, the Dean first described the consultation process that had been used to develop the document and bring it forward to Council. The Strategic Planning and Budget Committee began consultation with departments two years ago. Their deliberations were interrupted while the Faculty prepared its Financial Plan, in response to the government's new funding formula, and the University's new internal budget allocation process. The Financial Plan was approved by Council on January 19, 2001, and the Strategic Planning process was then re-activated in earnest. Between January and April, the Strategic Plan was drafted and reviewed by Deans and Chairs, the Strategic Planning and Budget Committee, and all constituencies in the Faculty (full and part time faculty, staff, and students). All of these efforts are reflected in the document before Council today.

MOTION: (Montanaro, Waugh)

“that the Faculty of Fine Arts Strategic Plan (FFAC-01-04-27-D5-REV.) be approved.”

The Financial Plan had two main objectives: 1) to eradicate the Faculty's operating deficit and balance its budget by May 31, 2001 and 2) to forecast ways in which the Faculty could improve its enrolments in the future, thereby generating \$1.4 to \$1.7 million dollars of FTE revenues over the next three years. These two objectives then informed preparation of the Faculty's Strategic Plan.

He drew Council's attention to several passages of importance:

- Section II on page 6, which outlines the Strategies for the Future. The preface unequivocally states that the Faculty's present mix of disciplines is its strength, and re-affirms a commitment to retain existing programmes. In order to accommodate trends and new elements in the mix, however, such as the digital technologies, we may have to re-think and re-configure, but no cuts or programme eliminations are foreseen.
- On page 8, in the research section, a reference to part time faculty has been added. Part time faculty in Fine Arts are different from part time faculty elsewhere in the University; as practicing artists, they have historically played an important role and will continue to do so, in Fine Arts.
- On page 8, the section on Curriculum and Enrolment Management, is an important reference point. Enrolment management is now a fact of life, as it is the driving force behind the way which we receive our operating funding. The number of FTEs, the variation in clientele, and all movement of students both into and out of Fine Arts courses, will be reflected in the budget. This denotes a heightened responsibility for budgetary imputability. Within the document, there is a later reference to the administrative re-structuring of the Office of Student Affairs. This again is a reflection of the importance of managing student enrolments, from the time of admission to the time of graduation.

At this point, there were several questions from the floor:

- T.Waugh asked if it were true that there is a moratorium on funding of new programmes by Quebec. In response, the Dean explained that this is indeed true, and that we will have to find our own means of “starting up” new programmes. However, if planned carefully,

FTEs should then generate enough funding, particularly at the graduate level, to completely fund new programmes. He also added that the Financial Plan had outlined several strategies to build such “start up” funds, including general education courses, and privatization.

- L. Lerner then asked for an update on the present status of the general education requirements, and in particular, whether Arts and Science would be creating its own courses or would be directing students interested in the fine arts towards courses that we will be offering. In response, the Dean noted that the principle behind the requirement is one of inclusivity of all parts of the University, and the value of having mobility for students between Faculties is a plus. However, it is true that financial concerns are also driving the discussion, and educational value is not necessarily receiving prominence.
- J.-P. Duchesne noted that apart from general education requirements, all students have free elective requirements as well. If courses are attractive, students will register for them, whether or not they fulfill general education requirements.
- J. Locke noted the mention of co-operative education in the Strategic Plan; the Institute for Co-operative Education is now located in the CB Building, its proximity may provide an opportunity for more interaction. He also noted that the projected increases to new admissions were modest, totalling only about 5% of present quota.
- B. Layne asked that the name of the newly established Institute be changed in the document to: the Institute for Emerging Digital Media.

Under a discussion on Section III - Administration of Resources, the following comments and suggestions were made:

- On page 16, Item 4b), J. Locke found the time line between the space planning and enrolment management processes to be inconsistent. He, therefore, suggested that this recommendation be re-worded as follows:

“The planning for determining the configuration of the new Visual Arts Building will reflect the Enrolment Management plan for the Faculty, with its identification of areas of growth, retraction and conversion.”

This change was accepted.
- On page 15, item 3a), K. Griffin noted a vagueness in this recommendation on technical support staff. Noting that other recommendations on staff and faculty were much more specific in nature, that technical support staff across the Faculty play an important front line role, and have also been impacted by FTE growth, she asked whether this recommendation could be elaborated and/or made stronger. She also asked that a commitment to training technicians in digital technologies be included.
- In response, the Dean affirmed that technical support staff are very important to the delivery of academic programmes in the Faculty. He then explained that unlike other staff groups, there were several issues in the technical sector that needed comprehensive review, among them the conversion to digital technologies, and the planned move of the Visual Arts to a new building within five years. Given the urgency of the Strategic Plan, and the complexity of some of the issues involving technical support staff, he had asked Tony Patricio to

prepare a separate, parallel report on technical services throughout the Faculty, the results of which will be incorporated into the Faculty's Strategic Plan at a later date.

He also pointed out that the recommendation on "studio demonstrators" (item 2b) should also be included into these discussions.

- K. Griffin expressed concern that, despite being involved in the process, technicians believe there is a hidden agenda. They have not received adequate information on this process. The Dean immediately committed to ensuring that the process would be both open and transparent.
- He then described the overall context for the process, as follows. Clearly, the Faculty has modest resources, and very ambitious goals. The digital technologies, on a financial level, have been a "black hole". Simply put, the Faculty cannot continue to do everything it has done, in the same way, as well as "add on" new programmes in digital technologies. The government's funding formula, applied by the University in its own distribution of operating budgets, has been crippling for the Faculty. We must, therefore, marshal all of our resources and use them as efficiently as possible.
- J. Locke noted that the functional space plan had included additional space for most visual arts programmes and services. This would seem to imply that no cuts to staff are envisioned. D. Pariser asked that point be included in the minutes.
- P. Cousineau-Levine suggested that the recommendation be re-written with a more positive preamble, that stresses the importance of technicians and the Faculty's reliance upon them.

This change was accepted, and the text revised as follows:

3. Technical Support

- a. Technical support staff across the Faculty provide a variety of front line services to students. These positions are critical to the functioning of the programs and are affected by the same issues as those involving faculty and administrative staff - among them, the impact of digital technologies, changing enrolments, and the new financing formula upon delivery of programs and services.

Unlike other staff groups, the diversity and complexity of technical support needs across the Faculty cannot be adequately addressed within the format of this Strategic Plan. In addition, the potential to re-organize some technical services, particularly in light of newly planned space on the downtown campus within the next five years, must also be taken into consideration.

As a result, a separate study of technical support is currently being conducted. This study will involve broad consultation at each stage of the process and, when complete, will form part of the Strategic Plan. In the short term, technical services will be rationalized throughout the Faculty, their financial viability and organizational structures assessed, and where possible, immediate changes will be implemented (e.g. training in digital technologies). In the long term, these recommendations must also accord with the Faculty's Enrolment Management Plan.

- On page 14, item 1 a), H. Johnson found the final phrase on the ratio of part time to full time faculty ambiguous. He asked what it was supposed to mean.
- In response, the Dean noted that this sentence had been generated during the consultation meeting with part time faculty, in response to a question about university-wide norms. The ratio that the University is attempting to achieve is 60:40 (full time to part time). This statement confirms that the ratio in Fine Arts may not conform to the rest of the University, but also that it may vary between departments within the Faculty, depending upon particular academic needs.
- E. Mongerson supported the above statement, and asked that it not be modified.

As there were no further questions or discussion, the question was then called and **CARRIED**.

10. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

S. McLeod
May 25, 2001